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ABSTRACT

Individuals, organizations, and American Indian tribes are recognizing that libraries and the information services which they offer are necessary to meet Indian goals. Although these goals may vary widely from improved access to education, cultural information, information on available social services, to leisure reading, they are all based in a component or institution designed to process information--a library. Therefore, the materials in the library must be carefully selected. Part of a series of 11 guides designed to provide initial direction and alternatives to those planning or developing Indian library and information systems, this guide discusses the evaluation of Indian materials and analyzes existing evaluation criteria developed by various groups. Several reviewing materials which can be used in selecting materials are discussed. Eleven sources for additional information are also cited. (NQ)

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Materials Selection

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by

Rosemary Christensen

Guide Number 10

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PREFACE

Libraries and information centers are rapidly becoming an integral part of Indian life. Individuals, organizations, and tribes have come to the decision that libraries and the information services that they offer are necessary to meet Indian goals. These goals may vary widely, from improved access to education, cultural information, information on available social services, to leisure reading. They are all based in a component or institution designed to process information - a library.

As yet, only limited resources are available to meet this fast growing demand. Funding must usually be garnered from other programs. Professionally qualified Indian librarians and trained Indian technicians are in critically short supply. Books and other informational resources still contain racist information. Experience in developing programs and services which meet the local community's needs is slight. Specific sensitivity to Indian ways and alternatives is just developing as library and information services develop in Indian communities.

The purpose of these guides is to provide initial direction and provide alternatives to those planning or engaged in developing Indian library and information systems. Each guide discusses basic policies, initial steps, or discreet activities that appear to be essential to successful Indian library service. Each guide gives the reader basic direction and alternatives for development in his locale.

The reader is strongly advised to recognize these guides for what they are - ideas and programs that have been successful in the communities where they are used. They will not solve all the problems of Indian library service. They will provide the reader with some ideas, programs, and concepts to be considered in light of informational needs in the specific Indian community to be served.

Three basic types of information are presented in the guides: societal coping skills, basic considerations for implementation; and descriptions of services unique or critical to Indian libraries. These guides are supplemented by the Appalachian Adult Education Center's, Library Service Guides. The excellent Appalachian guides deal primarily with services in small communities.

Coping skills are given in two guides, (#'s 1 and 2). Organization and implementation will be discussed in five of the guides (#0,3,9,10, & 11) which cover: funding, organization, assessing needs, materials selection, and training. Five guides will discuss services unique or critical to Indian Library Service (#4,5,6,7, & 8). These guides cover: cataloging, urban services, adult education, program elements, and information services.

Charles Townley, Editor

ED108788

Materials Selection for Indian Libraries

Rosemary Ackley Christensen

Guide 10

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CONTENTS

Definition of Terms..... 4

Statement of Problem..... 4

Principles of Selection..... 6

Alternative Selection Criteria for Indian Materials..... 7

A Written Collection Policy..... 8

Suggested Reviewing Materials..... 9

Do's and Don'ts..... 11

Further Reading..... 12

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I. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Indian, the word means different things to different people. It comes to, who is doing the asking?, is it the state of government, the federal government, a non-Indian, an Indian? Legal definitions differ depending on legislation cited. For example, Johnson O'Malley regulations define "Indian" according to blood quantum. To be an Indian one must be at least one-fourth in blood quantum, in other words, one should have at least one Indian grandparent. Title IV, the Indian Education Act of 1972 does not have a specific blood quantum requirement. It identifies Indians as meaning "any individual who 1) is a member of a tribe, band, or other organized group of Indians, including those tribes, bands, or groups terminated since 1940 and those recognized now or in the future by the state in which they reside, or who is a descendant, in the first or second degree, of any such member, or 2) is considered by the Secretary of the Interior to be an Indian for any purpose, or 3) is an Eskimo or Aleut or other Alaska native, or 4) is determined to be an Indian under regulations promulgated by the Commissioner, after consultation with the National Advisory Council on Indian Education, which regulations shall further define the term "Indian". Title IV has one of the more liberal definitions of "Indian". It is a good idea to ask the local Indian governing body to define Indian. Indians themselves will identify who is Indian and that is the only identification that really means anything.

Indian Libraries

Indian libraries are libraries with Indian clients. This may mean that these libraries will need to redefine their services to meet the needs of the Indian community. The usual library does not serve the Indian community. Indians are culturally, different from the white man. His needs are different based on his culturally different society. Therefore the Indian library ought to make every effort to meet Indian needs. The best way to find out the library services needs of the Indian community is to ask Indians.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Materials available in libraries and other places of materials storage are infamous for their poor treatment of Indians. The furor created in the late sixties and early seventies by Indian tribes and other Indian organizations created a flurry of activity to remedy the situation. However, years of neglect cannot be eliminated in a decade and the inequitable treatment given Indians in textbooks, fiction, books of all kinds, movies, film strips, television and other media still can be seen by flipping open a book, or watching movies on television.

An actual event will illustrate the need for careful selection of materials. In a small Wisconsin town, two Indian

professional educators were involved in an evaluation of the local school including curriculum, materials available and treatment of Indian children. One of the consultants met for a short time on an informal basis with the local Indian club. The President of the Indian (school) club during the discussion chided another member of the club who complained of a class reading from a book that labeled Native Americans as savages who massacred white pioneers.

> "Why not call Indians savages, we were savages back then; why not call it a massacre, we did massacre back then."

These remarks were made by a high school senior, member of a tribe indigenous to the area who had lived in harmony with nature and other tribes for thousands of years before white contact. Yet the child was only showing what she had learned during her years of formal schooling. She actually believed her people were savages and they massacred white people! How can the problem be better stated than remembering the words of an Indian child who learned too well from materials available in the library. Unfortunately such statements are not few and far between, yet in the age of civilization, the age of the enlightened seventies called by some the decade of the American Indian one can hope materials selection will improve so that our grandchildren will see a fairer picture of American Indians.

Because the words "savage" and "massacre" are used frequently in Indian materials presently available, a word about them. Indians existed in the geographic area presently labled, the United States, for thousands of years before any white contact, including early pre-Columbian white contact such as Viking, Norsemen, and Phoenician contact. Indians built homes, educated young people, structured their society according to tribal values, practiced varying religions and by all indices were human beings with a logical, beautiful culture. As any human being, any patriot would do, the Indian people defended their country, their land, their homes, and their families from the white intruders.

It is only when one approaches American history from one point of view that the word "savage" makes any sense. Savage, according to Webster, is a person belonging to a primitive society, a brutal person, not domesticated or under human control, one who is cruel, ferocious, uncultivated, wild and so on. From the Indian point of view, "savage" can truly be labeled on the people Dee Brown tells about in his historical account of the white settling of this country, Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee. Webster's definition of "massacre" is an act or an instance of killing a number of human beings under circumstances of atrocity or cruelty; a cruel or wanton murder. Interestingly enough whenever this term is used when discussing white-Indian interaction, the word is applied to Indian activities only. In many accounts of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, or as it is commonly called, "Custer's Last Stand", it is said that Custer and his soldiers were massacred; whereas in the battle of Wounded Knee, the victory of the white soldier over the Indian was cause

0006

for a celebration. In reading of the two battles it again is interesting to observe in the Battle of Little Big Horn, the battle was between soldiers of both sides. Indian soldiers fought white soldiers. The Indian soldiers won. In the Battle of Wounded Knee, after herding the Indians to Wounded Knee, the soldiers killed men, women and children. By following Webster's definition (and note Webster is not an Indian) which was a massacre and which was a victory? By any fair indices and following closely the definition of the words used, the Battle of the Little Big Horn, a battle between warriors on both sides, would be a well-fought, deservedly won victory for the victorious Dakotas and Cheyennes. The Battle of Wounded Knee was an out and out cruel, vicious massacre of wounded, ill, poor-weaponed Indian men, defenseless women and children.

Because words as the above are used indiscriminately and loosely, Indian children and non-Indian children are learning every day that Indians are savages who massacre people. Furthermore Indians are dumb, lazy, drink a lot and they cannot be trusted. Indians are not people either, else, why would books, and all other media refer to Columbus discovering America as if the people already here inhabiting the country were lower than human therefore their actual discovery and use of the land, the rivers and the various trails did not really count.

Alas, the problem exists of materials emphasizing Indian degradation. It behooves <u>any</u> librarian but especially librarians working for Indian libraries to be aware that such materials exist and to rectify the situation.

III. PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION

The first and most important principle of selection is <u>involve the Indian community</u> in every aspect of selection.

Make an effort to organize a committee of Indian people who will help to write selection criteria. If you don't know where to begin in setting such criteria consult the next selection.

Following committee formation, provide the committee with sets of criteria that have been tried by other Indian organizations. However do not insist that these criteria (as written) will be appropriate for your particular community. Be guided by the community in flexing and changing the sample criteria to fit the needs of the Indian community.

Help the committee write a set of criteria to be used in selection of Indian materials.

Following the completion of written criteria tailored to the community, circulate in some way, the criteria for others in the community, (not on the committee) to look at it, make comments, perhaps suggest changes.

Following the community acceptance, establish and begin using the material for criteria selection. As you will probably

not begin with a clean slate (that is not have an empty library to begin with) institute some way of critiquing extant materials, again involving members of the Indian community.

You will want to have two distinct items--a set of criteria by which to judge new materials, and a method by which to look at old materials. You will need to organize ways which new materials are measured (by the set of criteria). Some of the selection criteria proposed in the next section assumes whomever is doing the judging will be a sensitive, knowing person. One can't apply certain criteria if one doesn't know a modicum of Indian history. For example, The Memoirs of Chief Red Fox is a spurious book, discounted by Dakota and non-Dakota scholars alike. However, frequently, non-Indian readers will laud the book, not knowing any better. Therefore it is good for the selection committee, the library staff and others to keep abreast of what Indian scholars are saying about new offerings. Read reviews written by Indian scholars and scholars respected by Indian scholars.

Set up and maintain a method of reviewing materials selcted by the selection criteria. If you are able, attempt to have a group of Indian scholars who will review the books for you. Frequently, reviews can be done by people who are knowledgeable in the field, such as Indian college teachers (and the like) who will probably agree to do reviews for the cost of keeping the review copy.

IV. ALTERNATIVE EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR INDIAN MATERIALS

Criteria as it is presented in the documents discussed is a series of questions. Apparently selection criteria consists of asking the proper question, knowing what the answer should look like, and applying the proper question to the document being evaluated. As materials vary, criteria will vary. The same criteria will not be appropriate for textbooks, for movies, for fiction, but the germ of the criteria will be present in all selection criteria.

1. Consider the selection of criteria developed by the Indian Historical Society, 1451 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, California 94117. Read Textbooks and the American Indian (the Indian Historian Press, 1970) wherein the selection criteria the Historical Society applied to textbooks used in California schools is contained, pages 14 - 24. Read "Common Misconceptions About American Indians" also by the Historical Society contained in Hearing Before the Special Subcommittee on Indian Education, part 1 (Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1969 pages 406 - 422).

2. Consider the selection criteria being developed by Project MEDIA under the Auspices of the National Indian Education Association. Project MEDIA is located at the National Indian Education Association, 3036 University Avenue S.E., Suite 3, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414. This evaluation criteria will

probably be the most valuable criteria available as Project MEDIA is using a wide representation of the national Indian community to help Project MEDIA form the evaluation criteria. Ask to be put on the mailing list for Project MEDIA's excellent materials including the Project MEDIA Bulletin.

3. Consider the selection criteria developed by the American Library Association, ALA Guidelines for Adults, adopted by the association in 1972. A copy of the guidelines are available from ALA. These criteria repeat criteria developed by a group of librarians from the University of Minnesota Library Institute, 1970. These criteria and those of the Institute (University of Minnesota) contained in American Indians an Annotated Bibliography of Selected Library Resources 1970 published by the University of Minnesota Library Services Institute for Minnesota Indians (1970) and available from the Indian Education Section, State Department of Education, Capitol Square Building, 550 Cedar, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 are alike in another way. The criteria assume a great deal of knowledge on the part of the evaluator. The question is asked, "Does the book express Indian values?" (from the institute document) and "Does the Material express Indian values..." (from the ALA guidelines). These questions (and others) assume the evaluator is knowledgeable of Indian values, as they are practiced now in a variety of ways, from a variety of tribal groups to a knowledge of the values extant at the time (of the book) one is evaluating. This is a tall order. One wonders if such assumptions are valid. To make ALA and Institute criteria more useable, consider using How to Find and Measure Bias in Textbooks, by David Pratt, (Educational Technology Publications, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632, 1972). Pratt's small monograph gives the evaluator some guidelines that can be more easily used if one is not a scholar in the literature on Indian values, (or other fields assumed in some of the alternative criteria). The method Pratt advises is simple to use and combined with the selection criteria alternatives listed, evaluators ought to be able to put together selection criteria tailored to the Indian community. Another phamplet that may be of some use is Eliminating Ethnic Bias in Instructional Materials: Comment and Bibliography edited by Maxine Dunfee and available through the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1701 K Street N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C., 20006 (1974).

An alternative to developing an extensive selection criteria is finding appropriate bibliographies to use as sources of selection. However since few excellent bibliographies are available, especially for children's books, this alternative is not recommended. Do, however use the organs of information available to Indian readers for your source of lists of appropriate books. These reviewing materials are listed in Section VI.

V. A WRITTEN COLLECTION POLICY

Why?

Whatever your selection policy becomes, it ought to be in written form for use and viewing by the Indian community. A written policy should justify the need for a selection criteria, will emphasize the involvement of the Indian community, will reflect the assessment of need as to library materials for the Indian community, will define evaluation criteria for benefit of the committee, the staff and the community and will have a provision(s) for change if necessary in the selection criteria as well as spell out the ways of handling individual complaints regarding the selection, housing and displaying of the actual library materials. It should also be possible for individual library patrons to register their complaints of the screening device used by the library if they feel that it is either too confining or not extensive as it should be. A mechanism should be built in for periodic reassessment by the community of the selection criteria as well as the reviewing policies of the library. It is important for the policy document to spell out who applies the selection criteria, especially if the final selection criteria depends on subjective questions or questions that assume knowledge (i.e. Indian values). Example: in the Library Institute University of Minnesota criteria, the question is asked, "How might the book affect the Indian person's image of himself?" That is a subjective questions and may vary from person to person depending on age, background and cultural identification. Many assimilated Indians who are "pulled myself up by my bootstraps, so why can't they?' Indians may look at that question differently than an Indian that lives on a self-supporting reservation or an urban Indian or than any number of non-Indians one would care to name. Therefore criteria for the appliers of criterion selection procedures will need to be spelled out in the policy document. Other procedures involved in the selection of materials, as well as reviewing procedures as well as day-to-day library procedures will need to be spelled out in the policy document.

VI. REVIEWING MATERIALS

A variety of communication organs exist familiar to and used by Indians (as well as knowledgeable non-Indians) in materials selection. Sophisticated Indian-watchers use these communicative devices on a timely basis. It behooves the librarian working with Indians to not only be aware of these extensions of the "mocassin telegraph" but to make them available to the Indian community. The list given is only an example of the plethora of newspapers, newsletters, paperbacks, and other media materials that exist and continue to multiply on a daily basis. The listing is recommended for use but is in no way a definitive group. An example of the extensive listing that could be given is seen in American Indian Periodicals in the Princeton University Library A Preliminary List by Alfred L. Bush and Robert S. Fraser, Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey, 1970). The preliminary list is an attempt by one university to list the periodicals in the Princeton Library. The list contains 78 pages! (copies of Princeton's list can be obtained from Mrs. P. Waage, Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey 08540).

0010

Recommended review materials:

Akwesasne Notes available from Mohawk Nation, via Rooseveltown, New York 13683. This is an excellent newspaper read on a wide basis by the national Indian community. The art work is superb and the news is timely. Each issue includes a resource page wherein appropriate materials are listed and are available through Akwesasne Notes. There is no fixed subscription price for the newspaper. People pay what they can afford. Available through the same source is a beautiful calendar each year with pertinent dates of Indian history noted throughout the calendar.

Wassaja published monthly except for December and available through the American Indian Historical Society, San Francisco is edited by Jeanette Henry one of the first activists in evaluating materials and developing selection criteria Wassaja is widely read by the national Indian community although it differs in its approach from Akwesasne Notes. Wassaja reviews books and other materials as well as presents timely articles of interest to the national Indian community. The subscription price is $10 per year.

The National Congress of American Indians Newsletter is available through NCAI, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Room 1010, Washington, D.C., 20036. NCAI is one of the older Indian national organizations with a national Indian community following.

Other newsletters exist on a regional basis, for example, The Rough Rock News published by Rough Rock Demonstration School from Chinle, Arizona featuring national education news as well as local news; International Independent Indian School Bulletin from T. R. I. B. E. Incorporated, Bar Harbor, Maine, a regional newsletter concerned primarily with education news, or the Makah Newsletter published by the Makah Tribal council, Neah Bay, Washington. Ask Indians or non-Indians working in Indian organizations for the names of reliable newspapers of the region.

The Indian Historian is published by the American Indian Historical Society, 1451 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, California 94117 four times a year. Subscription price for one year is $6.00. The magazine features articles by Indian authors, articles of historical interest, poetry and book reviews. The magazine enjoys an excellent reputation among Indian scholars. The Weewish Tree a magazine for young Indian people is also published by the Historical Society. Publication dates are September, November, January, February, March, April, and May and subscription price is $6.50 per year. An Indian education newsletter is available from the National Indian Education Association which features "Checklist" written by Charles Townley, Director for the NIEA Library Project. Townley's Checklist features annotations of Indian materials.

All of the above materials feature book reviews as well as some film reviews. Regional newsletters, newspapers and magazines

will usually feature a section on book materials review. Additionally, regional daily newspapers (for example, Minneapolis Tribune) are featuring Indian reviewers for books on Indians. Keep your eyes open, and if possible set up your own review service with a reliable Indian organization or local Indian scholars. From time to time, the local Historical Society magazines may feature book reviews written by Indians on Indian-related books and other materials. A regular persual of Indian written newspapers and magazines will eventually give librarians and other staff a "feel" for how books and other materials will scan as far as selection criteria is concerned. It is necessary however, to have reliable Indian reviewers on hand to help maintain selection quality.

VII. DO'S AND DONT'S

Repetition underlines and emphasises therefore:

1) DO involve the Indian community in every aspect of materials selection.

2) Do become informed in order to do a good job of operating from selection criteria.

3) Do embark on a self assessment regarding your IQ (Indian Quotient). How much do you really know about Indian history? or Indian values? or Indian tribal differences? (Quick, for two points, how many languages were spoken when that lost Italian arrived on American shores?)

4) Do read at least the Indian bookshelf sampler offered through Akwesasne Notes. You will receive $125 worth of books for $100 - a good way to get your Indian collection started as well as giving your reviewers something to sink their teeth in for a low sum of money.

5) Do invest in low cost paperbacks for circulation among teenagers. Try on a trial basis to circulate them without worrying when and if they come back.

6) Do attempt different time schedules for the library. Remember Indians (frequently) operate in Indian time, meaning that the nine to nine operation may find your library poorly attended at certain times. Ask the advice of the Indians, and be flexible so that times offered will be the times the Indian community will really use the library. Try at least on a trial basis different time blocks. Perhaps, noon to midnight?

7) Do decorate your library walls with pictures and other documents pertinent to Indian history. Posters of Indian patriots are available from Akwesasne Notes. Consider hiring a photographer to take pictures of the local leaders for blow-up homemade poster of Indians everyone will know.

8) Do work within a timeline for completion of the criteria selection instrument. A timetable could follow these proposed sample lines:

	Months					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Library Review Committee formed	X					
Committee/Staff training		X				
Evaluation criteria constructed			X			

0012

	Months					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Evaluators trained to use criteria			X			
Criteria applied to materials				X		
Incoming/current holdings						
a. Review current holdings			X	.	.	.
b. Remove or discuss what to do with inaccurate materials.	X		.	.	.	.
c. Select and activate materials that meet criteria			X	.	.	.
Incorporate entire system into library					X	
Continue review, evaluation and modification					X	

9) Do practice your professional skills and try not to give advice on areas outside your skill area. It is not necessary to apologize for your professional skills. Indians appreciate a professional and will listen to his advice. But be accurate and correct.

10) Be aware that Indians may practice a different form of communication than non-Indians intra-group. Indians frequently use a form of teasing that is apparently foreign to non-Indians. After years of interaction with Indians, non-Indians have been known to become proficient at it and even like it.

Don'ts

1) Do not make the mistake of getting involved in Indian politics. This is the cause of many a downfall of people truly interested in working with Indians, but they become enamoured of their expertise (in working with Indians) and fancy themselves Indian experts. Indians laugh at people who become Indian experts overnight. These overnight wonders will eventually get ignored by the Indian community.

2) Do not get upset by the different ways of Indian People. Remember Indians are first and foremost individuals. Apparently Indian people's sense of timing, called in great humor, "Indian time", is annoying to non-Indians. Frequently, Indians are late for appointments and meetings. Take this in stride. Eventually, you will become accumstomed to and perhaps even enjoy the more leisurely way of Indian time.

3) Do not ask personal questions. If Indians want you to know about their private lives they will eventually tell you.

4) Do not mistake quietness as dislike or boredom. Frequently Indians not having anything to say will say nothing. Small talk is not de rigueur in Indian society.

VIII. FURTHER READINGS

The American Indian; Conflict of Cultures (Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Cedar Rapids Community Schools, 1972) a curriculum guide for ninth grade.

American Indians: An Annotated Bibliography of Recommended Resource Materials (San Jacinto County, California, San Jacinto Unified School District, 1971). An elementary school bibliography approved by regional reputable Indian organizations.

Literature by and About the American Indian: An Annotated Bibliography for Junior and Senior High School Students, Urbana Illinois, National Council of Teachers of English, 1972.

American Indian Authors, Natachee Scott Momaday, Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, Massachusetts, 1971. Examples of works done by American Indian authors.

Annotated Bibliography of Outstanding Works on American Indian Literature, available from Dr. Ortiz, Department of Anthropology, Princeton University, 1972.

The Indian in American History, Virgil Vogel, Integrated Education Associates, Chicago, Illinois, 1969.

"Influences of Reading and Discussion on Attitudes of Fifth Graders Toward American Indians". Journal of Educational Research, 1968, 52, 130 and 134.

Index to Bibliographies and Resource Materials, National Indian Education Association, Project MEDIA, 3036 University Avenue, S.W. Suite 3, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414, Spring 1975.

Biographies of American Indian Authors (mineo), write to Kay Gurnoe, Department of Indian Education, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Also available from the same source, "Recommended Children's Books on Indian Culture". Ms. Gurnoe is an Indian teacher currently assisting the Director of Indian Education for the Minneapolis Public Schools.

"Library Services to American Indians" by June Smeck Smith, Library Trends, 20, No. 2, 223-238.

Naumer, Janet N. "Library Services to American Indians," in Smith, Josh. ed. Library Services for Special Groups. New York: Science Associates, 1974. pp. 1-74.

National Indian Education Association
Library Service Guides

0. Guide to Funding Sources for American Indian Library and Information Services.
1. Working with Indian Communities and Agencies to Establish Indian Library Services.
2. Working with Library Agencies to Establish Indian Library Services.
3. Initial Organization and Staffing Patterns for Indian Library Services.
4. Alternatives to Standard Classification and Cataloging for Indian Libraries.
5. Urban Indian Library Services.
6. Adult Education and Indian Libraries.
7. Promoting Indian Library Use.
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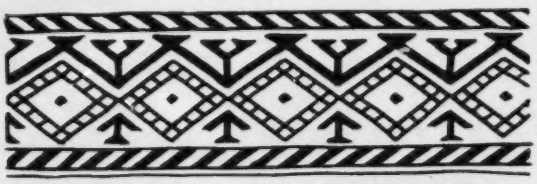
9. Assessing Information Needs in the Indian Community.
10. Materials Selection for Indian Libraries.
11. In-Service Training in Indian Libraries.



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